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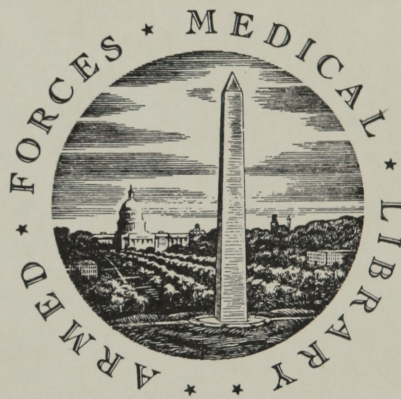

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1810

THE

COW POX ACT

WITH THE

ORDER OF THE LEGISLATURE;

AND A

COMMUNICATION,

RELATIVE TO THE SUBJECT,

FROM THE SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF MILTON.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL COURT

FOR THE USE OF THE TOWNS IN THE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOSHUA BELCHER,

1810.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ten.

An Act to diffuse the benefit of Inoculation for the Cow-Pox.

SECT. 1. *BE it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same,* That it shall be the duty of every Town, District, or Plantation, within this Commonwealth, wherein no Board of Health shall be established by law, at their annual meeting in the months of March or April, annually, to choose in the manner in which other officers are by law chosen, three or more suitable persons, whose duty it shall be, to superintend the inoculation of the inhabitants of such Town, District, or Plantation with the Cow Pox.

SEC. 2. *Be it further enacted,* That it shall or may be lawful for the inhabitants of any Town, District, or Plantation, at any of their said annual meetings, to provide for the inoculation of the inhabitants of such Town, District, or Plantation, with the Cow Pox, under the direction and controul of said Superintendants, or a Board of Health, where such Board is established, and to raise all necessary sums to defray the expenses of such inoculation, or such part thereof, as they may deem proper, in the same way, and manner, that other town charges are by law defrayed.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

H. G. OTIS, *President of the Senate.*

Approved, C. GORE.

Attest, WM. TUDOR, *Secretrary.*

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In Senate, March 5, 1810.

ORDERED, that the Secretary cause an attested copy of an Act, entitled " An Act to diffuse the Benefit of inoculation for the Cow Pox," to be printed, and one copy thereof to be transmitted as soon as may be, to the Clerk of each Town, District, or Plantation, within the Commonwealth :—And, also, one entire copy of the proceedings of the town of Milton, relative to the inoculation for the Cow Pox, as reduced to system, by the Selectmen, and a Committee of said Town.

HARRISON G. OTIS, *President.*

In the House of Representatives, March 5, 1810.—Read and concurred.

TIMOTHY BIGELOW, *Speaker.*

THE Legislature having by a publick Act, which is transmitted herewith, sanctioned the practice of Inoculation for the Cow Pox, as a never failing preventive against the Small Pox; and by an order, directed that the proceedings of the town of Milton, should be published with said Act, for the Towns in this Commonwealth; the same is herewith transmitted for your use, and also the motives for obtaining said order, which are expressed in the following Communication from the Selectmen and Committee for Vaccination of said Town.

Amongst the multiplied instances of the love of a kind Providence, none seems to be more evident, than the admirable dispensation, which has bestowed on Man, the means of a perfect security against the small pox. The nature of the benefit is so great and so simple, that no one can mistake the source; it is not the result of studies long and expensive, it is not the result of the experience of the learned of successive generations, it is the immediate gift of a merciful Providence, simple and easy to be communicated, simple and easy to receive; it calls for a tribute of gratitude, which every heart should delight to offer.

To diffuse the blessing among every class of our fellow citizens appears to be an object highly desirable, and it will be found that a public inoculation of the Cow Pox, if pursued with zeal, is easy and rapid in its progress, but method will facilitate the process and render it more safe in its operation; to that effect we would wish to offer to the consideration of our fellow citizens, the propriety of the following arrangements.

That in such Towns, who choose to adopt the measure,

the inoculation should take place in June; a stated time for all to set to the work, will procure the advantage of rendering the Cow Pox matter abundant, at the time it is wanted, and easy to be diffused from one Town to another; which advantage would be lost, if instead of a general understanding, the Towns were to proceed at various, unconnected periods.

It is therefore proposed, that in every County the inoculation should begin in the Shire, or other conveniently situated Towns, as early in June as possible, and that as soon as the people there are under the operation of the disease, the other Towns should send, for a supply of Vaccine matter, to begin their inoculation with. The month of June, appears to be peculiarly favourable for the inoculation; the state of the weather being in general steady and moderate, the inoculated would be less exposed to casual disorders, which by interfering with the inoculation, might possibly impair the credit due to the Vaccine affection; it is perfectly safe, mild, and inoffensive in its operation; but the friends of Vaccination, should use every caution to secure that credit by judicious arrangements.

The inoculation from arm to arm, is more likely to take, and to produce the real disease, than when performed with dry matter; it is recommended therefore, that individuals under the operation of the disease, should volunteer to go, and transmit to their friends in the neighbouring Towns, the benefit which they have secured for themselves.

By dividing a Town into wards, it will contribute to the convenience of the inhabitants, and by fixing the meetings at separate days, it will give the selectmen and superintendants an opportunity, all of them, to attend; beginning at the Meeting House ward, and inviting such characters to attend, whose presence, and co-operation, will confer on the undertaking, that respectability to which, its object gives it a title.

A notification for the inhabitants to attend posted on the doors of the Meeting House, expressive of those

feelings of gratitude, which so singular an instance of Divine Goodness, is calculated to create, appears to be within the Spirit, which, we feel impressed, should lead, and direct, every movement in the prosecution of this undertaking, that, of improving the Benefit to the praise of the Almighty Giver, and in love to our Fellow Men ; we take the liberty to subjoin a form of such notification, not with the presumption of offering a model, but for the purpose of elucidating further the idea.

The Superintendants are invited to call upon every family, and use their best exertions, to persuade all that are exposed to the small pox, to attend ; an abundant harvest will be likely to reward their labour ; and it is presumed, that in every Town, the arrangements would be such, as to secure the Benefit at the expense of the the Town, to such of the inhabitants as may be destitute.

On the day appointed for the inoculation, it is proposed, that the superintendants should make a note of the names and age of every person inoculated, with a number to it, and should give to every such person, a ticket with the corresponding number,as per form No. 2.

That they should appoint a second meeting eight days after, for the physicians to determine the result of the inoculation. That, at this second meeting, they should add to the notes first taken, the result of the inoculation of every person, and that said result should be written on the back of the respective tickets, and signed by the physician.

That the superintendants should make out from the above notes, taken at the time of the inoculation, a record of the names, age, and result of inoculation, of every person inoculated, and deposit the same with the Town Clerk.

That in such Towns, where more than one physician is employed, the name of the physicians be placed at the head of their respective wards, in order that each one of them should be answerable for his Doings, as per form No. 3.

That class of citizens, from whom is derived, protec-

tection, and safety for the rest of the Community, is most of all, entitled to our tender regard and anxiety; we hope therefore that in every Town, the Militia will be the first object of the attention of the Superintendants for Vaccination.

Our fellow Citizens, who by their avocation are called to brave the dangers of the seas, and to visit foreign climates, are also an object of peculiar anxiety; the changeableness of their situation, will deprive a considerable proportion of them, of the benefit of annual inoculations, and it is hoped that measures may be so combined in the Maritime Towns, as to insure the benefit of Vaccination for the crew of every Vessel, before they leave port. With such simple and easy method of preservation, the loss of every Life by the Small Pox, appears to be, an indelible reproach to society.

If the attainment of so great an end, as a security against the small pox, is desirable for every Town, it is equally so, that much caution should be used, to avoid being deceived into a false security. The security will depend upon using genuine Cow Pox matter, *and employing physicians, who have had an opportunity to acquire a* practical knowledge of the characters of the disease.

We feel so forcibly the necessity of keeping unimpaired the estimation of the Blessing, as to offer it as our warmest invitation to such Towns, as may be deprived of the opportunity to procure *genuine matter*, and *experienced physicians*, rather to delay their inoculations, until such time, as they may be able to get both, *to their entire satisfaction.*

In the ordinary course of life, every Parent who has procured the security of his children against the small pox, by successive inoculations, cannot do otherwise than feel grateful and happy, he cannot be otherwise than an honourable object of praise and imitation; exalting is the thought of the numerous family of a Commonwealth, where not one life would be suffered to go to waste, by that dreaded Pestilence; annual inoculations in every Town would procure that happy result.

Amongst the officers which we are in the habit of electing annually in our Towns, is there any, whose trust is of equal interest to that, of those Superintendants, who would warn the Mother of the danger of her Child, who would annually contribute to the safety and welfare of the State, by preserving its inhabitants ? can any Town feel safe, without the annual appointment of such officers ?

Can there be any Town who would neglect to secure the proffered Blessing ? Annual inoculations properly organized, would be attended with little trouble, the habit would soon be taken ; parents would feel, that to secure their new offspring, is a duty to which they cannot attend too soon ; no person would be thought to neglect the Bounty of Heaven, and the Small Pox would be soon extirpated.

Thus far we have availed ourselves of the much esteemed privilege, which we owe to the indulgence of a Benificent Legislature, and thus far we trust, to be justified to express, that the proposed undertaking will bear the test of investigation.

Large sums are spent to fortify our towns and harbours, and we have the means to raise a powerful navy, but it may be in vain, if the life of our Militia and Sailors is left exposed to waste ; Life is strength, wealth, and respectability. Life preserved, after one generation will encrease strength in a rapid progression. Several thousands have perished by the small pox, in this Commonwealth, since the revolution ; if their lives had been preserved, their aggregate posterity might form, at the present day, several Towns ; several thousand houses might have been erected, by them and for them ; many hundred farms they might have cleared, and would now improve ; several thousand militia, they might this day have brought in the field, and some thousand dollars they might have added to the present revenue of the state.

Where is that Postertity?
Where are their Towns?
Where are their Farms?

And where that Legion, which would add a robust limb to our national strength at this moment of anxiety?

All swallowed up by the Destroyer.

But at those times the Blessing had not been brought to evidence, there has been no neglect yet; but what has happened before will happen again, therefore, let us see the light of this simple thing in time, for the more we shall fathom, the more depth we shall find.

Roused by a sense of danger in the first step of this undertaking, we have next stood up among our neighbours with a warning voice, we now come forth with recommendations and forms; not from a wish to assume over our brethren; what we propose, you will consider and improve; as we have proceeded, our feelings have been raised, and a sense of guilt would have attended the suppression of the same. With humility we are led to hope that you will accept our endeavours.

If we beseech you to mark the posts and the lintels of the doors of your dwellings, that the Destroyer should pass over: If we beseech you to seal your Militia with a scar, that they should be secured against the only Foe, which their bravery cannot subdue: If we beseech you, Men of Massachusetts, to rise up amongst our Brethren of the Union, in praise to a kind Providence, and to offer to other States, a worthy example to follow, our appeal to your feelings, we trust, will be pardoned.

The President of the Massachusetts Medical Society being willing to give encouragement to this undertaking, has expressed a generous readiness to furnish the matter; a general proffer would not be practicable, but we are authorized by that respectable Gentleman to say, that he will be happy to provide the Shire Towns with genuine Cow Pox matter, to begin their inoculations with, and any person applying to him, from the 15th of May till the 10th June, of the present year, with an or-

der from the Superintendants for Vaccination of such Towns, will receive a supply free of any expense. As it will be reserved exclusively for that purpose, it is requested, that no application should be made, without such order as above.

We now part with this work, which has been apportioned equally amongst the Towns of the State; may they strive to prosper it; to the Selectmen, that valuable order of society, to whom the country has been indebted from its first settlement, for such essential benefits, it is warmly recommended. Our hearts are deeply concerned, and would feel relieved of a burthen of anxiety, if the Doers and Lovers of Good, the Reverend Clergy, would condescend to become the Patrons of this attempt. Blessings would repose upon their exertions, and society receive this additional benefit from the Ministers of our holy Religion; we therefore beseech them to accept of this, our offering of a work of Love, whilst our ardent wish, is, that Peace and Harmony may dwell in your Towns and Families.

DAVID TUCKER,
WILLIAM PEIRCE,
JOHN RUGGLES, Jun'r. } *Selectmen of Milton.*

OLIVER HOUGHTON,
RUFUS PEIRCE,
JOHN MARK GOURGAS,
JASON HOUGHTON,
JEDIDIAH ATHERTON,
AMOS HOLBROOK, } *Committee for Vaccination of said town.*

Milton, March 10th, 1810.

N. B. If we had a further proceeding to recommend, it would be, that every Town which join in this undertaking, should furnish their representative at the next winter Session, with a certificate of the number of persons inoculated in such Town; in order that if the Legislature should think fit, to inquire then into the subject a general statement might be drawn out immediately. The interesting document might animate to the prosecution of the work, and to the perfection of a system to that effect; it might also tend to awaken other States, and bring them to follow the lead of Massachusetts.

FORM—No. 1.

Being the Notification of a public Vaccination, proposed, to be posted upon the doors of a Meeting House.

.....

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

It having pleased Merciful Providence, to make evident in our day, the Blessing of Cow Pox inoculation, by which, Man may be secured for ever, against that cruel Pestilence the Small Pox.

The inhabitants of the Town of are hereby notified, that in conformity to Law, a public inoculation of the Cow Pox, will take place, and be first performed at the Meeting House, on the June, and then proceed, from ward to ward, in the following order—to wit.

On the June, at ,,

,, ,, ,,

As Parents value the life of their offspring, they are invited to bring them, ever so young, to receive the benefit of that mild, and admirable preventive.

As Men value their families, and the happy land of their birth, they are invited to come, to secure their lives, which are the protection, and the strength thereof.

As Mothers value the children of their tenderness, they are invited to come, to secure their own lives, not to leave them orphans before time.

Our venerable Fathers are invited to take the lead, and by encouraging all to turn out, in praise to a kind Providence, to wrest from the hateful hand of the Destroyer, a weapon, by which, our Towns must again be afflicted, and the safety of our Land exposed.

Strangers and labourers in the Town are invited to attend, and partake of the Benefits. *By Order.*

Chairman of the Committee for Vaccination of said Town.

[*Name of the Town*] *May* 1810.

FORM—No. 2.

Being the Ticket proposed to be given by the Committee to ever Individual at the time he is inoculated.

PUBLIC VACCINATION.

[*Name of the Town*]

No. 1. *June* 1810.

You are desired to call again, this day week, for the doctor to determine the result of your inoculation.

Unless you call again, your safety against Small Pox infection, will remain uncertain.

You are desired not to scratch your arm, nor to permit any person to take matter from it.

Chairman of the Committee for Vaccination.

Then on the back of the Ticket No. 1. name of the individual.

Result perfect.

Signed by the Physician.

FORM—No. 3.

Being the arrangement of a Register of Cow Pox Inoculation.

Meeting House Ward, inoculated June 1810, by Dr.

No's.	*Names*	*Ages.*	*Result of inoculation.*
1	A.	34	Perfect.
2	B.	26	Omitted to call.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Secretary's Office. 18 March 1820

I certify the within to be the true abstract of the Proceedings of the Town of Milton, as filed in this office by the Selectmen of said Town, and printed in conformity to an Order of the Legislature made on the 5th instant.

WM. TUDOR, *Secretary of the State.*

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